

Dear Co-Chairs James Maroney & Michael D'Agostino and members of the General Law Committee:

I am writing in support of House Bill 5146, An Act to Establish a Supermarket Food Donation Program.

I have been active in food rescue in the Hamden/New Haven area for several years and I now serve on the board of Haven's Harvest, which works to rescue food from various organizations and distribute it within the local community as a way to mitigate hunger insecurity in our neighborhoods. There is so much food waste from our supermarkets and restaurants that it puts us to shame—it's also a huge environmental issue. Decaying food in our landfills is a source of methane gas and other toxic elements, so recovering food is a win-win-win for our planet.

While the bill helps ease the process of rescuing food, there are a couple of additions that would be extremely helpful for those of us in the food rescue world:

- Acknowledge that many supermarkets already donate—including Stop & Shop at some locations, Shop Rite, and Trader Joe's, which led the way for "expired" good food to be rescued into the community
- Add food recovery organizations to the language of the bill. Haven's Harvest is an established 501C3 organization that has worked tirelessly for years to establish its reputation for volunteer-led food rescue
- CT needs to create infrastructure and incentives for increasing storage capacity (as New York State has done). Our groups rescue food and we see an increasing need to be able to store the food safely so it can be resourced back into the local community.

Thank you for considering these items as the language of the bill is drafted. And thank you for your hard work on behalf of all of Connecticut.

Katherine Hinds
55 Fernwood Rd
Hamden, CT